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"Environmental Health Factors" (Part I)

The following is a transcription of the First Quarter 1975 issue of Dr. Royal Lee's *Applied Trophology* newsletter, originally published by Standard Process Laboratories.

Environmental Health Factors (Part I)

(This article continues in Part II, available here.)

Hazardous Substances

In his treatise *The Savage Cell*, author Pat McGrady, science editor of the American Cancer Society, raises the following question: "Can cancer sometimes be caused by the drugs prescribed to fight disease?" He answers his own question by stating: "A growing number of drugs are suspect," adding, "sometimes a drug will do enormous damage, and the public as well as the medical profession are horrified at what happened."

His remark causes us to wonder just how much cancer and/or other disease is caused by chemical pollution of the air we breathe, the water we drink, chemicals in our daily food, and the many medicines we take in our effort to regain lost health. He goes on to answer our query by his suspicions regarding teratogenic substances, or those which if given during pregnancy could cause malformation in the offspring. In this regard he states: "If teratogens are indeed cancer causers, a vast number of chemicals commonly found in food, water and drugs would be carcinogenic or cancer causing."

In a specific test, control chemicals given to pregnant mice caused cancer in the offspring six months after birth. Careful, dedicated scientists demand that such feeding experiments be pursued into the second and third generations. Hurried industrial scientists are not always that careful.

Apparently, the idea of a tolerated maximum for noxious substances in food, such as bacteria and filth, is no criterion of the toxic possibilities of carcinogens or of the capabilities of teratogenic chemical substances in food. Yet scientists agree that these are potentially more dangerous than any dirt or bacteria likely to contaminate our food.

Tolerances?

George Larrick, former administrator of the U.S. Food and Drug Division of the Health, Education and Welfare Department (HEW), has been quoted as saying, way back in 1957:

> "We have had some very narrow escapes because of the use of additives that had no place in food. It is inconceivable that this country should continue to expose itself indefinitely to the risks inherent in the present scheme of food control."

It is very doubtful the risks have decreased much since that time, as the major portion of the some 8,000 articles now on supermarket shelves did not exist at that time. The shelf life and color are generally preserved with additives, some of which have been found to cause cancer when injected into animals.

Food processors have been educated to a safe tolerated maximum dose of the simple poisons used in food years ago. Now they clamor for higher tolerances of complex chemicals, of which too little is known, which additives may combine with other chemicals in the body to form a harmful substance. A recent example is the discovery that the nitrates unite with the amines, in the body, to form new compounds called nitrosamines. Investigators have found the nitrosamines to be carcinogenic in animals. Some scientists are of the opinion that the effect of many of these chemicals, either alone or in combination, is cumulative and that they may cause cancer twenty or twenty-five years later.

They also claim that there is no logical safe alternative to completely banning (no tolerances) every chemical that has caused cancer anywhere, in any way whatever, in either animals or man. This is the substance of the Delaney Amendment, proposed by the Senator from New York and which became a part of the Food Additives Act of 1958. Sincere nutritional scientists are in complete accord with the Delaney Clause; however, some mercenary chemical scientists are now clamoring for the repeal of this public consumer protection law.

Noxious Chemical Compounds

Obviously, space limitations deny us the opportunity to detail the insults that human physiology suffers from our chemicalized environment. It is encouraging to note various scientific journals and publications now call attention to the problem. In his highly readable 1974 book *The Poisons Around Us*, Henry A. Schroeder, MD, professor emeritus of physiology at the Dartmouth Medical School, calls attention to various metals and compounds, detailing their tendency to cause such chronic diseases as high blood pressure (cadmium), mental retardation and hyperactivity in children (lead), and cancer (arsenic and nickel carbonyl). He stresses the importance of the nutrients zinc, copper, manganese, and others, and he finds the typical American diet seriously lacking in these elements.

Interestingly, wide-ranging "consensus" journals are now raising questions heard only from farsighted pioneers a short twenty years ago. The prestigious British journal *The Lancet* recently published an editorial titled "Does This Chemical Cause Cancer in Man?" (September 14, 1974): "Every year some thousands of new chemical compounds are synthesized and brought into use," we read. "We need to know whether any of the new chemicals to which we are exposed will cause cancer."

After noting the ineffectiveness of conventional laboratory approaches, this editorial plea for effective, meaningful research calls for screening of "all new compounds entering the human environment." Additionally, it is felt that "we should work back to try to find out what existing factors in our environment cause the 50 percent of cancers that are thought to be due to environmental chemicals."

The succinct conclusion: "More mice will not solve the problem."

As another example, note the article "Carcinogens and Carcinogenesis in the Colon," appearing in the September 1973 issue of *Hospital Practice*, by Jack W. Cole, MD, professor and chairman of the department of surgery, Yale University School of Medicine. The author used labeled precursors of DNA and RNA to determine rates of cell division and cell population in colonic epithelium. His conclusions:

> "There is growing belief that the cause of many cancers of the colon will be found in the environment. We now have histologic and biochemical evidence that the surface epithelial cells of the colon are altered in the course of tumor development. The inciting factor may be something that is eaten, absorbed, and excreted in the bile, or an ingested foodstuff or chemical acted upon by intestinal bacteria and excreted in the fecal stream."

With the thought that carcinogens act by contact with bowel mucosa, many researchers are citing with interest, as does Dr. Cole, the studies of British physician Dr. Dennis Burkitt comparing diet, stool bulk, and bowel transit time. Dr. Burkitt suggests the low incidence of tumors of the colon and rectum found in South African Bantu is related to their traditional unrefined, high fiber-content diet, which produces large, bulky stools that have an average bowel transit time of about 30 hours. In Western countries with a high incidence of colon cancer, he notes that the usual diet consists largely of low-fiber-content, highly refined carbohydrates, which produce small stools that have an average bowel transit time of 81 hours.

Another immense area of concern that could be detailed, if space permitted, is the interaction of various drugs. A single example may suffice to illustrate the point. Drugs that inhibit the normal enzyme monoamine oxidase (MAO) are prescribed for the patient with mental depression. If a depressed female patient is given an MAO-inhibiting drug by her psychiatrist and an amphetamine to depress her appetite by another physician whom she visits for a weight problem, the resulting drug interaction can be deadly. Fatalities have been reported in like situations.

The interaction of MAO inhibitors and certain foods is also well documented. A severe hypertensive crisis is likely if the patient on such drugs eats tyramine-containing substances, such as cheese (particularly aged or strong varieties), some wines (particularly chianti), and some grain alcohols. The crisis is accompanied by headache, sweating, dyspnea and cardiac arrhythmias. A similar interaction and resultant hypertensive crisis can be produced with drugs in over-the-counter cold remedies or anorexiants.

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Chlorine, also of the halogen group, has often been cited by fluoridationists as a long-time drinking water additive that had proved harmless and so signified the harmlessness of fluoridated water. Recent investigation has determined that because of the many more uses of both in our chemicalized everyday living, new problems to health are constantly arising. Both are now being used in separate combinations as a propellant in pressurized aerosol cans that receive daily use. Chlorine, originally used only in drinking water purification, is now used extensively in swimming pools as a disinfectant, with irritation of and absorption by the skin and as a dangerous combination ingredient in plastics manufacture. Also, it continues to be used as a bleach in white flour milling and for many household uses.

Fluorine is being used to a much greater extent by steel mills, aluminum factories, in brick manufacturing, in commercial fertilizers, in insecticides and rodenticides and as an ingredient in gasoline. As more uses occur, more obstacles to good health seem to arise.

Just recently biologists in one of our Southern cities have become very concerned, as chlorination of the drinking water supply chemically alters organic pollutants in the water by changing them into possible cancer-causing substances. These substances were found in the blood of some residents. Now, after more than fifty years of treating drinking water with chlorine to control bacteria, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has verified the fact that suspected cancer-causing chemical agents are apparently formed during chlorination.

Perhaps this information has been delayed some four or five years because an early investigation of Joseph Price, MD, of Grand Rapids, Michigan, did not receive the necessary monetary backing. Dr. Price's investigation, carefully executed, concerned the effects of chlorine in the drinking water of chickens. From this experiment he concluded that chlorine was an incompatible chemical with undesired physiological effects.

The increase of chemical fluoride in food processed with fluoridated water is verified by a report from the Canadian National Research Council scientists, in the *Journal of Food Science*, November/December 1966. They determine that "the total average daily fluoride intake when consuming such food plus fluoridated water increases from 1–1 .5 mg to 3–5 mg." With fluoridated water being used in practically all beverages and ice cubes it would seem that a heavy beverage consumer, whether he consumed alcohol, beer, soft drinks, wine, tea, or coffee, could really exceed the recommended intake limit of one part per million without ingesting it from any other source.

With the mention of alcohol, we recall another very hazardous combination of drugs. Alcohol in combination with the constituents of some so-called sleeping pills first came to our attention when it caused the death of a famous woman reporter. Since then, many more deaths have resulted from similar reactions. As Dr. Franklin Bicknell advises in *Chemicals in Your Food*, combinations of chemicals and/or drugs can be hazardous to health, generally without causing suspicion, especially if their effect is cumulative and they are ingested over a long period of time.

Health Research Needed

"The Medical Ostrich has buried its head in the sands of biology and turned its backside to the major social issues of medical care today. This must change."

So states John H. Knowles, MD, in *Prism* (November 1973).

Without a doubt our national health has skidded to a new low because of the lack of direction, repetition of the same projects, and duplication of efforts in our presently controlled medical research. Health research has become a hit-or-miss proposition with poor coordination and less cooperation between interested professional organizations and responsible governmental agencies.

As Alfred M. Sadler, MD, recently stated: "Separatist forces work to the detriment of all concerned." The pollution of our air, food, soil, and water, all of which affect every person's health, has been sidetracked for lesser projects of no logical benefit. In fact, Congressional investigators into research, past and present, are amazed at the wanton spending of tax money for useless projects. Apparently, researcher Dr. Albert Sabin agrees when he says:

> "A good deal of medical research is repetitive, ordinary and nonproductive. Merely repeating what others have done wastes federal money. We have to come up with solutions to the diseases that are killing us off."

However, with favored industry being the first beneficiary such solutions have been delayed.

Recently, scientific magazines have mentioned some good research projects that some mercenary research scientists have wrecked through the pollution of the truth. Apparently, industrial pressure and the fast buck of the profit motive has, in some instances, overruled scientific truthfulness and the true concern for national health. In a present investigation of the National Science Foundation (NSF), Senator William Proxmire stated:

> "It is awarding most of the grants to the very universities that have the job of judging its effectiveness. I think it is high time the NSF looked past the East and West Coast academic monopolies to find other important

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He is very perturbed in regard to the Foundation's wasting tax dollars on foolish projects and neglecting really important investigation. The project that really irked him is a $342,000 federal study in regard to the sexual habits of 1,000 women and 400 men students at Michigan State University. He said these young women will be asked to answer detailed questions about where, when, with whom and how often they have engaged in sexual activities. However, David J. Kallen, conducting the research, advises: "A legitimate and important research undertaking, the purpose of the study is to help provide better understanding of the information and attitudes that influence the use of contraceptives." But Senator Proxmire considers it an invasion of privacy and a waste of taxpayer's money.

A recent quip advises: "Taxpayers should have a special watch. It wouldn't tell time—just wring its hands."

According to Representative Chalmers P. Wylie, the Research Service in our Agriculture Department has gotten into the act with a $69,111 project in Poland to determine how long acorns can be kept in storage. The reason given: "A method of long-term storage is needed to guarantee a continuous supply of oak transplants." Congressman Wylie retorted: "Oak trees have been growing for hundreds of years without this sort of boondoggle."

Why not divert some of this tax money to fundamental nutritional research projects to promote health and save lives? It would seem this type of research has been held in abeyance far too long. Worthwhile health research projects have been piling up because of lack of financing. One such project is the one we mentioned in our last issue, the lifesaving combination vitamin-mineral-hormone food regimen clinically researched by Dr. James P. Isaacs, a surgeon at Johns Hopkins Hospital. With this regimen Dr. Isaacs believes half the people who die yearly from heart attacks could be saved. He is hoping the government or some foundation will continue with his investigation.

Another example is the "super-nutrition" diet of Dr. Emanuel Cheraskin, chairman of Oral Medicine at the University of Alabama. The experiment was made with 54 female patients afflicted with cervical cancer and due for radiation therapy. The high protein-vitamin-mineral and low refined-carbohydrate diet was given to half of the women one week prior to scheduled radiation treatment, during the time of treatment and for three weeks following treatment. In the super diet group of 27, more than 90 percent of their cancer cells were destroyed by the radiation. The other half did not fare near as well.

Dr. Cheraskin has the reputation of being an honest researcher. He advises: "A high carbohydrate diet would be harmful for people suffering from cancer, since cancer cells flourish on glucose in the system." He is quite disappointed that no one has made a follow-up study on this research. He is hoping that his latest book, *Psychodietetics*, will focus more public attention on his claims.

Waiting projects with nutritional aspects just may receive more attention from governmental agencies now that both the president and Congress are taking action in regard to poor public relations and wastefulness of energy, time, and money.

Previously we have mentioned the clinical research being carried on by a pediatrician turned allergist, Dr. Ben F. Feingold of the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center in San Francisco. He has treated hundreds of hyperactive children on a diet that is free of foods containing synthetic flavors and colors. Dr. Feingold maintains that within a month 50 percent of his patients can usually be taken off the tranquilizers and amphetamine stimulants that have been used to modify their wild behavior. Hyperactivity or hyperkinesis is described as "excessive physical activity coupled with lack of concentration and learning difficulties."

He also has authored a book titled *Why Your Child is Hyperactive*. Like most clinical investigators he also had difficulty in getting through to the government. It seems they prefer statistical data rather than clinical observations. He reported it has been "like a brick wall, giving me no support, only discouragement, as though they were representatives of the food industry, rather than a government agency."

Apparently, new government interest has been revived because Dr. Keith Connors of Boston in a similar project has come up with similar dramatic changes, comparable to the studies of Dr. Feingold. So his endeavors are now being recognized, as the Food Research Institute of the University of Wisconsin will conduct a study with 30 to 40 children, and Dr. Connors has been assigned a larger experiment involving 100 children. It would seem that this project would have had a higher priority inasmuch as it involves the future health of our nation. Or, perhaps there could be a project to find out why we have so many of these children and why the number has increased steadily. And it would seem that we have taken a backward step by protecting the teachers and neglecting possible aid for the children.

According to Dr. Harry Morgan, professor of education at Syracuse University, two million hyperactive schoolchildren are being given tranquilizers. Actually, this is wrong, for as Dr. Morgan says, "Tranquilizers thwart a

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However, school administrators are in favor of the practice, possibly because teachers want quiet classrooms. The tranquilizers have been given to the children as the teacher sees fit, regardless of the fact that medical study groups have determined that "a specific cause-effect relationship exists between the drugs and a variety of blood disorders. It would appear that we must revert to a safer doctor-patient relationship and discontinue mass medication through unqualified people, whether it is indiscriminate use of tranquilizers, fluoridation of drinking water or gobbling tons of aspirin products.

It is well to recall Dr. Bicknell's warning: There is no dose of cancer-causing chemical so small that it is safe." He also states: "The United States leads the civilized world in chemicalized food and in degenerative diseases."

And we must consider that industry continues to add more and more of such substances to our daily routine contacts.

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